

SELF-CONFIDENCE TRANSFORMATION



HOW TO BOOST YOUR CONFIDENCE, OVERCOME
SOCIAL ANXIETY, AND EMPOWER YOUR LIFE
FOR SUCCESS

Disclaimer

This e-book has been written for information purposes only. Every effort has been made to make this ebook as complete and accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes in typography or content. Also, this e-book provides information only up to the publishing date. Therefore, this ebook should be used as a guide - not as the ultimate source.

The purpose of this ebook is to educate. The author and the publisher do not warrant that the information contained in this e-book is fully complete and shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions. The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by this ebook.

SELF-CONFIDENCE TRANSFORMATION

Table of Contents

Introduction: Why Self-Confidence Changes Everything	6
No, Really.....	7
Chapter 1: Defining Confidence	13
The Subtle Difference	15
Be Kind, Be Yourself	17
Chapter 2: The Decisive Action-Taker	22
Overcoming Risk Aversion	23
Social Pressure and Diffusion of Responsibility	25
Chapter 3: Overcoming Social Anxiety – Be Socially Bulletproof	28
Where Does Social Anxiety Come From?	29
How to Overcome This.....	30
A Brief Primer on CBT	31
Cognitive Restructuring	33
Chapter 4: Social Nootropics.....	36
Social Nootropics That Work and That Don't	37
Chapter 5: Combating Chronic Low-Esteem.....	40
Chapter 6: Knowing Your Mission	45
Charisma.....	46
Being in Flow.....	47
Chapter 7: The Confidence of Success	49

SELF-CONFIDENCE TRANSFORMATION

Rock Solid Confidence in Your Pursuits	50
The Law of Attraction	51
Chapter 8: Fit, Strong and Stylish	53
Style for Men and Women.....	54
Physique	56
Chapter 9: The Most Powerful Tool: Meditation	59
How to Get Started With Meditation	61
Chapter 10: Putting it All Together: How to be Magnetic.....	62
Conclusion: Confidence Checklist.....	64

Introduction: Why Self-Confidence Changes Everything



If you could enhance a single trait about yourself with the objective of improving your success, your happiness and your effectiveness, what would it be?

Your intelligence?

Your empathy?

Your height?

I'm here to tell you that 99% of the time, you'd get the best results by enhancing your **confidence**.

In other words, all those self-help books that tell you to take supplements to make yourself smarter, to work out more, or to stick a lump of butter in your coffee are barking up the wrong tree. With self-confidence, you can genuinely accomplish *anything*.

No, Really

This might seem like the kind of advice you get from a poster with someone punching their fist into the air in front of a sunset. It might sound like the sort of thing that your mother would say to you but which you suspect she may not really mean.

But it's true. Self-confidence really does change the way you approach every situation, the way that others see you and the way that you *come out* of every interaction.

How?

Well, let's start with a little bit of evolutionary theory.

Evolutionary psychology and theory in general, essentially tells us that all of our behavior and all of our traits have been 'selected'. In other words, your ancestors all managed to survive in order to pass on their DNA and create you because they had traits that *helped* them to survive. Your great, great, great, great, great Uncle Jimmy though died out because he had traits that didn't help him survive. And those did not get passed on to you.

What does this have to do with confidence?

Well, it comes down to the crucial importance of social interactions. That is to say that human beings are naturally social animals. We are pack animals just like dogs or wolves, although a human 'pack' is actually known as a tribe.

Being a member of a tribe would have helped us to survive by giving us strength in numbers, access to potential mates, greater resources etc. Those members of the tribe that would get

ostracized and left out in the cold would end up dying out as a result of less access to food and resources and less protection from predators.

So maybe Uncle Jimmy died out because he was unsocial and he got evicted from his group. Survival at least partly comes down to a popularity contest. Think of it a little bit like Big Brother!

But social success is not just a binary matter. It is not a case of being accepted into the group or not being accepted. It's also true that you can exist within that group at different levels. So, you have your alphas and your queens. These are the individuals that rise to the top of the ladder and which command the most respect. They are generally physically more intimidating, they are generally more intelligent and they are generally 'wealthier in terms of what they have access to.

These alphas get their choice of mate, they get first pickings when it comes to food and they get to sleep on the most comfortable pile of hay in the cave.

Point is, that being *alpha* means you are more likely than anyone else to survive and to *thrive* even more so. If you are an omega, if you are the jester of the group, then you don't get fed as well and you become much more likely to get killed when you go out hunting and gathering.

So, how do you ensure that this doesn't happen to you?

What's more, is that the alpha of the group or those that are higher up in the pecking order, will get access to the best mates. And I am talking strictly objectively here. These are the best

mates in terms of their genetic potential (which, by the way, is how we decide who we find most attractive).

If you are an alpha male, then you can offer better genetics, more resources and more safety for your offspring. And this is why women find you more attractive.

Likewise, if you are the alpha female, the same thing goes. You are the envy of every man, and this sends out a powerful social signal that lets you have your pick of the men.

And guess what? Nothing has changed. We might consider ourselves to be more civilized and advanced today. But the reality is that we are still operating by precisely the same rules.

Women find men attractive who are:

- Physically strong (good genetic material, good protection)
- Funny (intelligent – good genetic material, socially in-tune)
- Intelligent (good genetic material)
- Stylish (wealthy and socially in-tune, good social standing)
- Wealth (good protection/provisions)
- Masculine (good genetic material, good protection)
- Kind, generous (socially in-tune, good social standing)

Men find women attractive who are:

- Physically attractive (good genetic material)
- Conventionally attractive (social signal that they are 'in-demand')
- Funny (intelligent – good genetic material, socially in-tune)
- Stylish (wealthy and socially in-tune, good social standing)
- Well presented (this is a trick that enhances their apparent genetic material)

- Kind, generous (socially in-tune, good social standing)

As you can see, all of the traits that we look for in a partner ultimately boil down to *directly* enhancing the strength and resources of ourselves and our offspring, while also climbing the social ranks in order to ensure better access to resources in both cases.

And the same thing even happens when we choose friends. We are naturally drawn to people who are generous and friendly because they can help to provide us with more resources. And at the same time, we are also drawn to people who are alphas – because by associating ourselves with those people, we can thereby raise our *own* social status and thus our *own* access to mates and resources.

Now here's the other thing. Human beings are naturally inclined to try and make decisions about people quickly and on a snap-basis. This is also a trait that has strong survival value. If someone approaches you in a dark alley and you take a 'don't judge a book by its cover approach), then there is a very good chance you'll be mugged and no-one will ever know what an open-minded individual you were.

On the other hand, if you take the stance that 'they look scary, they are scary', then you will run and survive to be prejudiced another day. Unfortunately, this trait leads to a lot of other problems today. But that is outside the scope of this book for sure! (We're not here to right social injustice, sadly!)

This happens when it comes to social interactions too. When we meet someone in a bar, we very quickly need to decide whether

we want to spend time talking to them or not. Are they worth our time?

And finally, this is where we get to the power of **confidence**.

When we see someone who is confident. When we see someone who can walk into a room and command positive attention and success. When we meet someone who is well dressed and attractive... all these things make us presume that they are more alpha.

Why? Because someone who is highly confident it is safe to assume must have a *reason* to be confident. If someone is confident to tell jokes, to be confrontational, to act like themselves without feeling the need to 'fit in' and change their behavior... then the assumption will always be that there is a reason they are so confident. The assumption is that they must be alpha, they must be good genetic material, or they must be wealthy.

Whatever the case, that confidence buys the individual instant **respect**. It makes them more attractive in a sexual way but it also makes them a natural leader, it makes them someone that we feel able to put our trust in and it makes them someone that we want to associate with ourselves.

In short, by being confident, you become someone who is more appealing in every way on an unconscious way.

There are more ways that confidence makes us more potent and effective, but we'll address those points as we go.

Just know that confidence will improve your:

- Sex life

SELF-CONFIDENCE TRANSFORMATION

- Relationships
- Career
- Happiness
- Wealth
- Success
- Business endeavors
- Personal development

And much more!

Chapter 1: Defining Confidence

A graphic for Chapter 1. It features a background of various shades of blue and cyan triangles. A dark teal horizontal band across the middle contains the text "CHAPTER 1" in white, bold, uppercase letters, and "DEFINING CONFIDENCE" in white, uppercase letters below it.

CHAPTER 1 DEFINING CONFIDENCE

So, with that in mind, it's time that we set out to boost your confidence and start giving you that social edge that will make other people *instantly* look up to you and treat you with respect.

And the way we start to do that is by better defining the goal and the end point. We can't reach a destination before we know exactly where it is that we're going.

And so with that in mind... what *is* confidence? What does it look like?

In the truest sense, confidence is belief in yourself and a lack of anxiety. We're talking principally about 'self-confidence', though of course you can also be 'confident' in other things.

Self-confidence has many facets itself too though. Self-confidence means that you are confident in yourself, that you like yourself and that you don't wish that you could change some fundamental and underlying aspect of yourself.

This is self-esteem, and self-esteem is certainly incorporated into the concept of self-confidence. Self-confidence though more precisely focusses on your confidence in your own actions and decisions. Self confidence *requires* self-esteem, because self-esteem means that you trust yourself to make good decisions and to do the right thing. That gives you the *self-confidence* you need to trust in those decisions when you make them and to see them through.

So, let's imagine a situation. You are among some colleagues at work and there are some very loud characters there. Maybe the CEO is there. Maybe your direct boss is there. Maybe someone you fancy is there.

Everyone is planning on making a decision that you think is the wrong decision. You have a hunch that it could lose the company millions.

And so, you speak up and you course correct. You tell the group that if they go ahead with their plan, they will most certainly end up losing a lot of money.

That is self-confidence. Here, you are confident enough in your decision to speak up and to go against the grain. You are confident enough to confront your boss and someone who has many more resources than you. You are confident enough to put

yourself out on a limb and to potentially take the consequences if it comes to that.

And guess what? You just made yourself *incredibly* sexy to that colleague you fancy. And you caught the attention of your boss and the CEO because you now look like someone who must have a lot of insight and faith in themselves. You are not a yes man or woman. You are someone who is able to take charge.

But someone with a lack of self-confidence will sit quietly. That's because they will suspect that their idea is wrong. They will worry that if they speak up, they'll actually influence a decision that will end up badly damaging the company's finances for that year. You worry that if you speak up, you'll stutter and you'll get told to be quiet. Worse, no one will listen to you. And that colleague you fancy will be turned *right* off of you. And you'll be fired.

You lack the confidence of your convictions. And so you sit quietly by and miss your opportunity to climb the social ranks.

The Subtle Difference

Okay you think. So that means that all you need to do is to speak up about *everything, all the time*. Right?

Be confrontational, put yourself out there, contradict people...

Just generally shout loudest and make yourself known right? That will make you someone who is highly extraverted and someone who commands respect and demonstrates that they aren't shy.

STOP.

That is *not* confidence. That is overcompensation. And it is actually one of the biggest mistakes you can make. It comes across as ‘misguided’ confidence.

We all know what an unconfident person looks like. They are the wallflower. They dress to hide their figure, they sit quietly in the corner, they don’t make eye contact when they talk and they agree with whatever you say. They probably got bullied at school, seeing as they stand out as a socially ‘easy target’.

But don’t oversimplify matters. Quite does not mean shy. Quiet does not mean low in confidence.

In fact, some of the most confident people in the world are *highly* quiet. You know that type too. These are the people who sit quietly on the sidelines observing. They don’t say much, but when they do speak, people listen. They are reserved. Controlled. Confident. Stoic. Nothing ever seems to phase them.

Then you have the opposite: the loud-mouth who isn’t confident, just socially inept. They talk loudly and aren’t shy to speak their mind – but that just comes down to the fact that they don’t pick up on the social cues like eyes-rolling and people awkwardly shuffling away from them.

I remember a guy I went to karate with who would always hold his arm out and make this noise when he punched then look you in the eye as though to say, ‘that’s right, bitch’. He wouldn’t take part in the exercises properly and would often say things like ‘don’t worry, I’ll go easy on you’. Unfortunately, the guy was also about the *least coordinated* person I’ve ever known. He was not at all physically intimidating and his playing around was just

embarrassing and cringe worthy. He had a kind of confidence, but that only came from being completely un-aware of himself and of social cues. He had no idea that people avoided partnering up with him, or that people joked about him behind his back.

Likewise, we've all known people in the workplace who challenge everything we say, who talk up for the sake of talking up, and who in short just have 'little man' syndrome.

These people are over compensating.

Some people will even confuse aggression and cruelty with confidence. They subscribe to the notion that it is 'eat or be eaten'. They think they need to put others down, to tease them physically, to shout at them – as that way it won't happen to them.

You get women who want to make sure every knows just how confident they are, and they do that by wearing the smallest skirts possible, tons of makeup and incredibly low cut tops... all at the same time. Oh, and their clothes are also covered in *sequins*.

So, you mustn't shrink away from people and be shy to ever speak up. But you also shouldn't shout and be loud and try to show off how dominant and alpha you are.

So, what the heck *are* you supposed to do?

Be Kind, Be Yourself

The answer is simple: you be yourself.

Again, this sounds like your Mum's advice. But I mean that you need to *really* be yourself.

When I was at school, I was pretty confident. I was confident because I was disinterested in what other kids thought. The other kids at school, to me, were a distraction. I had friends outside of school from karate and from my previous school. And anyway, I was much more interested in training. I was obsessed with physical fitness as a kid and my objective was to be the next Jackie Chan. I spent my evenings doing pull ups and learning to back flip and then having drinks after class with those mates.

So, when I was at school, I just didn't have that crucial incentive to try and impress everyone and to fit in.

I also used to love comic books. Comic heroes were right in-keeping with my general interest in fitness and physical performance. I was training to be like Superman.

Now comics are generally considered pretty nerdy. They are considered socially taboo – for whatever reason – and people will often pick on people who read comics.

I remember a boy at our school used to try and be cool. Then one day, his backpack fell open and a ton of Spider-Man comics fell out. He protested that they weren't his, but the teasing began and of course no one believed him. People teased him and he looked on the verge of tears and swore they weren't his.

So, passing by, I did something I'm not terribly proud of. I said:

“Well, if they're not yours and you don't know how they got there... can I have them? I love Spider-Man!”

And he said yes. And all the kids who were teasing him, thought that was hilarious. And I would openly read comics in class on a regular basis and no one *ever* teased me for it.

Why? Because I owned it. And that's the only difference. I wasn't shy of it.

And you'll see this if you check out YouTube, or in your interactions in the real world. There are plenty of people who love comic books and popular culture but they manage to make it look cool. A bunch of guys who go to my gym wear Dragon Ball Z t-shirts but no one would ever call them 'nerdy'!

Likewise, when I admitted to someone the other day that I wasn't much of a fan of *Star Wars*, they made *me* feel like I was the weird one! They made me feel like I was uncool. Why? Because their love of *Star Wars* was so genuine and relaxed that they made it seem cool.

Liking comics isn't uncool.

Liking comics is uncool if:

- A) You are obsessive about it and you miss social cues – that means that you end up awkwardly talking about it too much to people who aren't interested, dressing up like characters in out of context settings in a way that's a little creepy etc.
- B) You are very awkward and shy about it. You deny it, try to hide it or apologize for it.

The same goes for anything.

So, what are we concluding here? We're concluding that at the very core of self-confidence is being true to yourself. It means

doing what you think, saying what you think, speaking your mind, acting the way you want to and dressing the way you want to.

You **NEED** to pick up on social cues. That means being polite, considerate and appropriate. It means not standing too close, or talking too loud (and this is what the slightly socially inept sometimes miss).

But you should also be completely yourself. Don't hide any aspect of yourself and likewise don't *exaggerate* any aspect of yourself in order to try and seem cooler.

Because this is the big mistake that the loud people make: they are overcompensating for what we can only assume is a lack of confidence. When someone speaks very loudly because they're trying hard not to seem shy or passive, they end up looking desperate.

If you are really confident, it means that you don't *need* to win the approval of others.

If other people feel that you aren't trying to win their approval, then they will unconsciously make the assumption that you have a reason to be so confident. **YOU** must be the alpha. If you're not trying to impress them, you must believe yourself to be higher in the social ranking than them. And if you think that, then you must have a reason to think it. And they must therefore be *lower* in the social ranking.

By being relaxed and cool and completely yourself, you will inspire others.

Kindness and Generosity

And actually, kindness and generosity is one of the most powerful ways to boost your confidence. That means building other people up, it means sharing your resources, it means smiling in a way that is genuine...

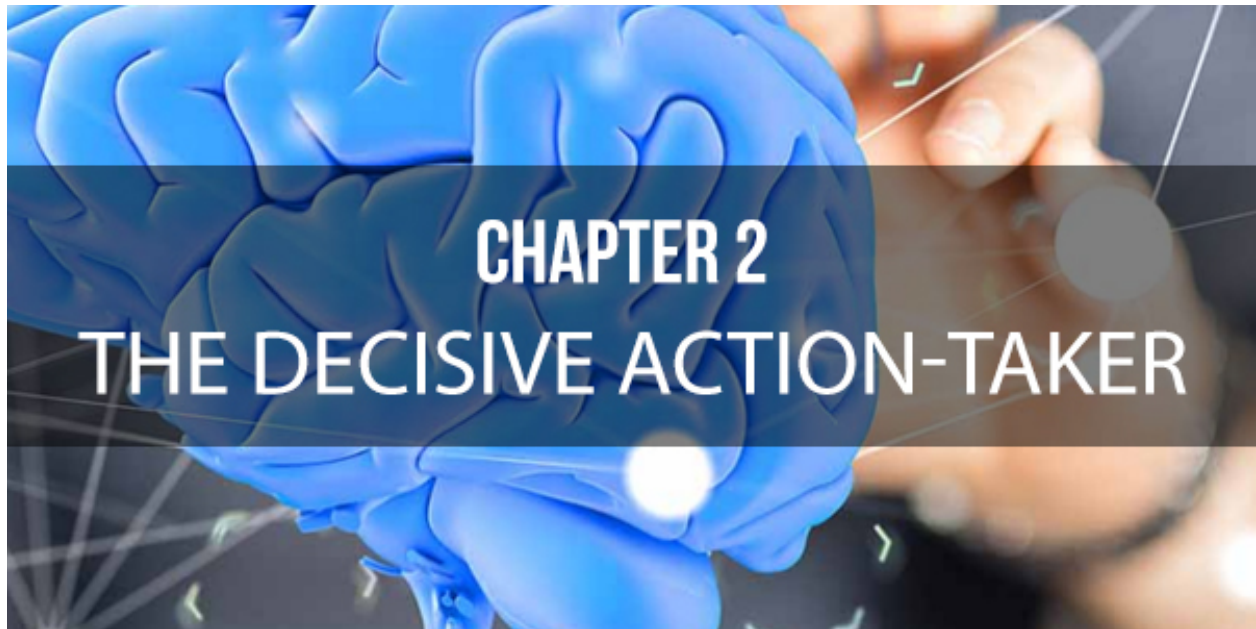
This is all incredibly important, because it creates a picture of you as someone who is *able* to be kind and generous. If you're being purposefully confrontational and aggressive, it comes across that you are defensive, which makes you seem weak.

If you build other people up, then you appear confident because it looks as though you aren't threatened by them in any way.

If you give people things, it makes you seem as though you have a wealth of resources and thus are able to share.

If you *genuinely* have nothing to hide and no reason to feel threatened, then there is no reason not to be kind, generous and open. And that's incredibly impressive to many people.

Chapter 2: The Decisive Action-Taker



Remember, we defined the difference between self-esteem and self-confidence as being the emphasis on action taking.

People who are self-confident are confident in their actions and decisions. They take action, speak up and put themselves out there. This *requires* self-esteem, but they are not the exact same thing.

Being able to decisively take action, to have faith in your own decisions and not to hesitate. That is one of the things that makes you appear

But the problem is that one does not always equate to the other. You can be very happy with who you are and happy with your own company, but at the same time you might still be indecisive and hesitant to take action.

Why does this happen?

Overcoming Risk Aversion

The problem is that humans are naturally risk averse. This means that we are more motivated by the fear of loss than we are by the promise of reward. So in other words, if someone offered for you to invest \$10 and there was a 60% chance you would win \$50 and a 40% chance you would lose and not get your \$10 back, a lot of people *wouldn't* invest.

In this scenario, investing is *clearly* the wise choice. This is statistically the best option and if you kept doing it, you would be almost guaranteed to be in profit in the long term.

But many of us wouldn't because we are afraid of risk.

Again, this is a trait that has evolved over many years. It makes logical sense for us to be risk averse. Why? Because it prevents us from taking chances that could immediately eliminate us. Being risk averse means that we won't take the chance of sneaking past that bear to get the berries. And that's probably, on the whole, a good shout.

But this same psychology and biology still influences us in the real world. It still influences everything we do. And even when the risk isn't physically threatening, it's still very real.

You still need to weigh up the pros and cons whether you're thinking of talking in public, or asking that guy/girl out on a date.

Let's reassess that situation that we discussed earlier: the scenario where you have the option to speak up in the board room and point out that the management is about to make a *terrible mistake*.

You are now going to weigh up the pros and cons. You'll look at what you stand to gain and what you stand to lose by speaking up.

On the one hand:

- You might prevent the company from losing millions
- You could impress your colleagues
- You could impress the colleague you fancy
- It could lead to a promotion

But on the other hand:

- It could all go wrong and the company could *lose* the money
- Now it would be your fault
- You might lose your chance of a promotion
- Your peers might be angry with you or upset
- There's a chance no one will listen to you, making you look weak and ineffectual
- People might laugh at you
- You might get fired

Shit, better keep quiet!

In other scenarios, we also make similar judgement calls. Even when this is less obvious.

For example, you might find yourself in a situation where you need to decide what to get for dinner. You go to the shops and you can't quite decide, so you call your partner and ask them.

And now you look weak and ineffectual. You look like someone who can't even decide what to eat for dinner!

But the reality was that you just wanted to make sure you would pick something that your partner would *enjoy*. Your motives were honorable but now you just look lame.

The same thing happens when you can't decide what game to play, whether to go on a night out or not... indecision just makes you look *wet*.

And again, the same thing happens if you are in a situation where you need to act quickly. Your friend is choking! Do you try the Heimlich maneuver? Do you call the ambulance? Do you pat them hard on the back?

Or do you stand there, frozen in indecision, until someone else steps up and takes charge as leader of the group? Or do you *all* just watch until the friend chokes to death, staring at you through wide eyes and asking without words 'why???'.

Social Pressure and Diffusion of Responsibility

This might sound a little farcical (and sure, I hammed it up), but it's actually a very real psychological phenomenon. Psychologists call this 'diffusion of responsibility' and it is closely linked with social pressure.

In one psychological study, participants were placed in a waiting room to see a researcher. While they waited, smoke started coming in from under the door and filling the room. It gradually became more and more, until people started choking.

And no one opened the door to inspect.

But if there's only one person in the room and it begins to fill with smoke, they *will* look into the cause.

Why? Because in a large group, the responsibility doesn't fall to anyone person but is rather 'diffused' across the group. Everyone is responsible and so really, *no one* is responsible. And because no one else is doing anything, this sends a social signal that we shouldn't either. It must be 'okay' or someone would have acted by now. And so, if we act, we will look as though we don't know what we're doing and we'll look stupid or worried as a result.

Not only that, but as soon as we do act, it *does* become our responsibility. If something goes wrong, people will now be angry at *us* and this is too much of a risk to take. So again, we freeze and we do nothing.

Often, anything you do is better than nothing. But we'd rather not act because we don't want to be responsible or take the risk.

And so, this is how you become the action taker: you decide that *risk be damned*.

You decide to remind yourself that any action is better than nothing. Action is strong, inaction is weak. If you want to be respected, you should act. If you want to help your friend, you should act.

Run through the worst case scenario in your mind – whether that is people being angry at you or whether it is the situation becoming your responsibility, thus leading to you being in trouble.

But now choose to be okay with that scenario and crucially, compare it to the worst case scenario if you *don't* act. Which may be worse.

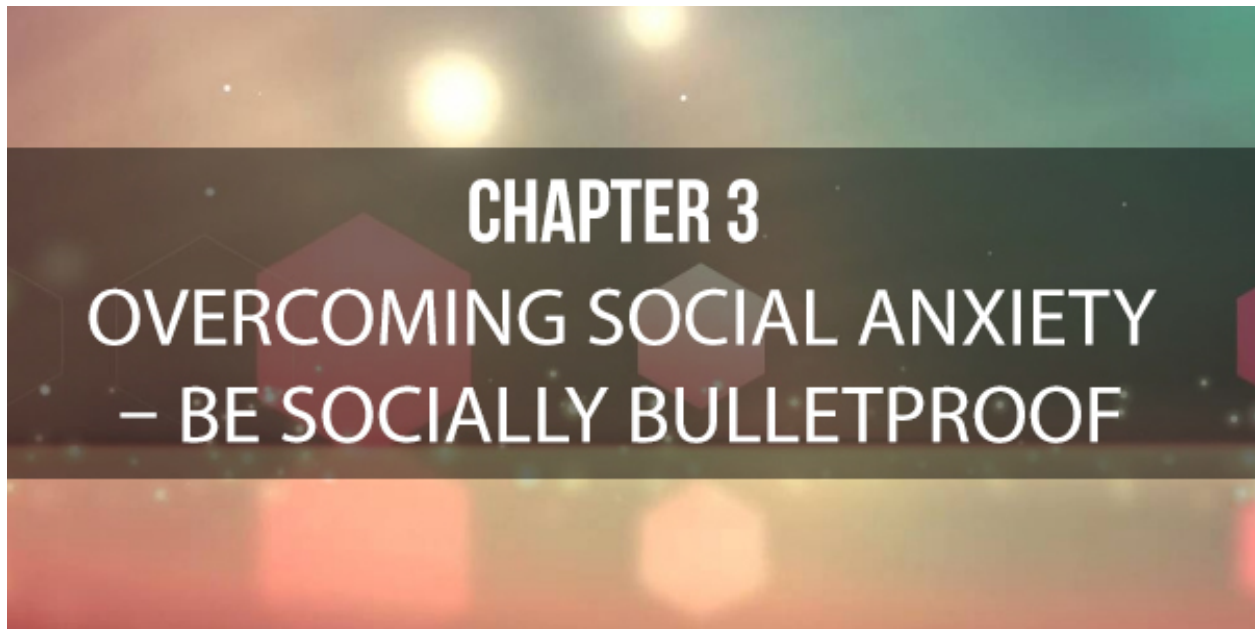
Be okay with your partner being annoyed at you for getting the wrong dinner, in the long run, it is better than losing their respect.

Be okay with your friend dying as a result of you trying to help them. At least they won't have died while you watched on and did *nothing*.

This is what it means to be a MAN or to be a WOMAN rather than a child. And it is an immensely powerful way to win respect and trust.

Ultimately, a leader needs to lead. That means they need to make decisions and they need to forge their own path.

Chapter 3: Overcoming Social Anxiety – Be Socially Bulletproof



Hopefully, you have a good picture by now of what it means to be confident. It means you're not trying to impress anyone but at the same time, you are confident enough to be completely yourself, to speak up and crucially – to take action. You don't hesitate or doubt yourself, you just see what needs to be done and you do it.

We'd all like to be more like that.

But there are many things that might be holding you back. And among the most common issues in this regard, is social anxiety.

Many of us struggle to speak up in public or to go against the grain, because we have a physical panic attack when we feel that we are about to put ourselves out there.

Many of us have butterflies when we are about to go on stage and talk in public. But we likewise also have butterflies when we're about to tell a joke among our own friends! We can't approach a member of the opposite sex in a bar without feeling physically sick at the prospect of being turned down.

Where Does Social Anxiety Come From?

This might seem rather extreme. Why would we have such an intense reaction to speaking in public? Why would we be literally at risk of passing out?

Remember: being laughed at or being ignored hurts our social standing and that hurts our likelihood of survival.

So, in a less direct way, being laughed at was just as much a threat to our existence as being faced by a predator back in the wild.

And thus, we get the exact same 'fight or flight' response. This is the body going into survival mode and it begins with the sudden release of neurotransmitters and hormones such as adrenaline, cortisol, dopamine and norepinephrine. Together, these chemicals increase our heart rate, send more blood to our brain and muscles and suppress activity in less urgent systems like digestion or immunity (hence why we get butterflies!). Our vision narrows and even the forward-planning part of our brain (the prefrontal cortex) gets temporarily shut down – increasing our ability to act reflexively and in the moment.

Adrenaline makes us shake, we breathe faster and we sweat.

All of this puts us in a state where we are better fighters, faster runners and more immune to pain. Our blood even thickens, so that if we get cut, we won't bleed out. It's an incredible survival tool.

But it's *not* so useful in an interview or on a date. In this scenario, it is sending the strong signal that you feel vulnerable. That you are desperate for approval and that you are worried that what you are about to say will go down badly.

This also sends the signal that you are lower in the social hierarchy and that the people you are talking to have no reason to try and impress you – rather it is the other way around.

How to Overcome This

Someone confident appears confident because they aren't worried. If you weren't worried, then you would be more confident.

In short, you look unconfident because... well, *you are*.

So how do you fix that? One way is to genuinely have so much faith in yourself that there is literally no reason to worry. You're so intelligent that you have a witty comeback for everything someone might say. You're so wise, that nothing you say would be mistaken. You're so *powerful* that no one is a physical match for you!

But most of us aren't at that point yet (this book will help you get there...). Right now, you're still feeling vulnerable and exposed. So, our objective is to essentially *fake it*.

And one way to do that is through CBT and desensitization.

CBT is ‘cognitive behavioral therapy’. This is a psychotherapeutic approach (an approach to therapy) that is based on changing your thought patterns. And we can also use it to desensitize ourselves.

A Brief Primer on CBT

To recap quickly on some psychology...

According to old-school psychologists in the 50s and 60s, our behavior is based purely on things we learn. It is based purely on associations and ‘training’. If something good happens every time you do something in particular, then you will be motivated to keep doing that thing in future. If something bad happens every time you do something, then you will eventually avoid doing that.

The most famous psychology experiment to demonstrate this concept was ‘Pavlov’s Dogs’, whereby dogs learned to salivate at the sound of a bell. Every time they heard the bell, they would be fed. Eventually, this led to a ‘Pavlovian’ response – a learned behavior – that responded to the bell alone.

You are nervous when you go to speak in public because you have been burned before. You have spoken in public and been laughed at or ignored. You’ve *learned your place* and now your body is telling you ‘shut up in case we get damaged again!’.

But here’s the worse thing: you have also *internalized* that reaction. You have gotten to the point where you massively expect that to be the outcome and so you *play out* that event in your mind’s eye. When you go to speak in public, to take action, or to do anything else, you visualize the most likely outcome. This

is one of the most important functions of the human brain and it is what allows us to forward plan and to avoid danger.

And when you visualize something, brain scans show that what actually happens is that the same brain areas light up as though that thing were actually happening. So when you visualize walking through the woods, parts of your brain light up that would normally light up when walking through the woods.

When you visualize talking in public and it going wrong, and people laughing at you, parts of your brain light up as though you were being laughed at.

In other words, you ‘reinforce’ the connection without it having to happen. You repeat the reaction over and over again in your brain, so that you are repeatedly being laughed at in public over and over again! And so, it is really no wonder that you can’t even attempt to speak up in public without your body going into ‘panic mode’.

This is the ‘cognitive’ element on top of the ‘behavioral’ explanation of human behavior. And it explains how we make matters worse for ourselves by telling ourselves that things are going to go wrong. By repeatedly imagining the worst or telling ourselves that people will laugh, that we’ll stutter, that we’ll be ignored, we become socially crippled and our body feels *in danger*.

This is the basic theory behind cognitive behavioral therapy as an explanation of how our brains work.

Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive behavioral therapy includes its own approach to fixing problems with our thinking, which can all be categorized under the heading ‘cognitive restructuring’. Cognitive restructuring in essence means that you are ‘reprogramming’ the way that you interpret events and the way that you think about future events.

Cognitive restructuring generally incorporates two main components. These are ‘thought challenging’ and ‘hypothesis testing’.

Thought challenging means that you are going to be looking at the things you are visualizing and the things you are telling yourself and then you are going to *restructure* your mindset by challenging those beliefs – by testing them for validity.

So, for example, you might be telling yourself that if you speak up in public, people will ignore you and you will look foolish. But now ask yourself this:

- Are these people not your friends?
- And therefore, is it really likely they’d ignore you?
- Moreover, would it really matter?
- If they’re not your friends, are you even ever going to see them again?
- Isn’t it better to at least try?

These days, the likelihood of being ostracized socially and left to fend for ourselves in the wild is *highly* unlikely. Meaning that it is pretty safe to speak up in any setting, no matter who you are!

And remember, we have the tendency to inflate risk and minimize reward. So be *honest* with yourself and rational and you can normally reduce the fear and the anxiety.

Hypothesis testing meanwhile means that you are going to literally test the theory and prove to yourself that there is nothing to be afraid of. Prove to yourself that you don't *need* to be worried about getting laughed at.

So this might mean that you *intentionally* say something stupid, just to see how people react. Or how about you *purposefully* go to say something in public and then stutter. What you'll find is that most people are patient and understanding and will react by simply waiting for you to finish. They'll even give you a big, support round of applause.

In short, hypothesis testing means facing your fears head on and seeing that they aren't so bad.

And what's more, is that by repeatedly facing your fears. By repeatedly putting yourself in frightening scenarios, you can actually become desensitized to the fear. If you *keep* speaking up in public, then you'll find that you eventually normalize it and it no longer becomes a big deal.

You can practice this in several ways:

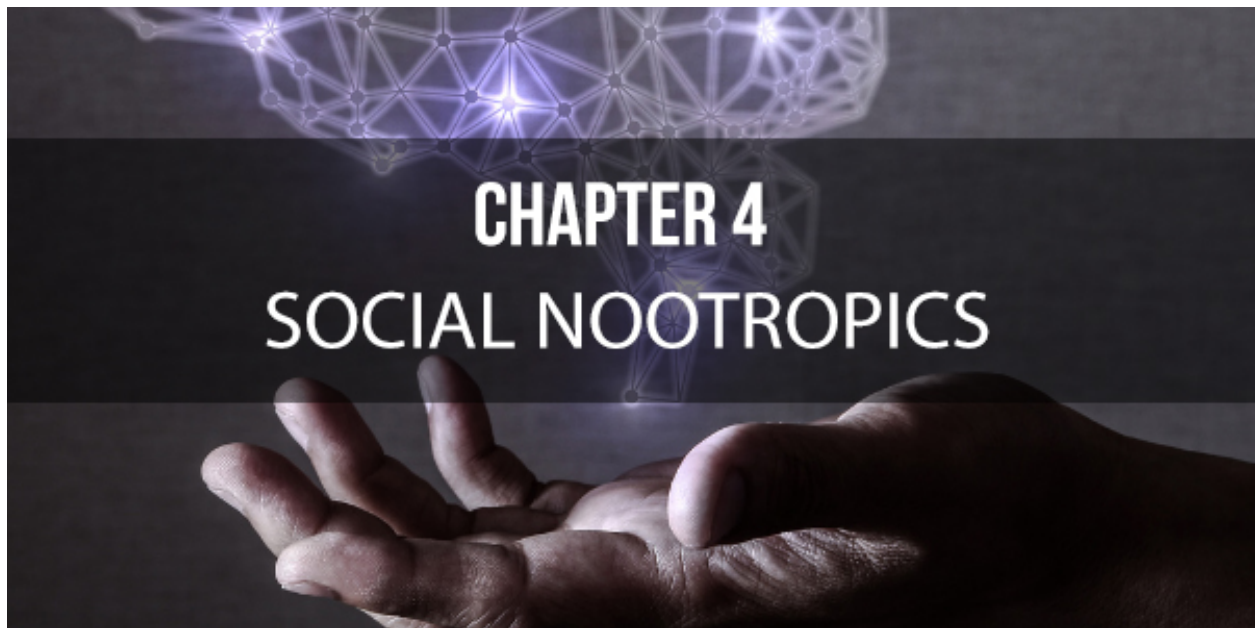
- Strike up conversations with strangers wherever possible
- Talk to shop tenders – be purposefully awkward or strange in places where you don't need to come back!
- Ask people for their numbers
- Make complaints if you aren't happy with customer service

- Attend stand-up comedy classes, acting classes or singing lessons. Anything where you have to perform in front of people

Do all this, and over time you'll become more and more calm. You won't have the fight or flight response when you talk or perform in public and as such, you'll come across as much more confident. People will *assume* that means you have absolute faith in what you're doing, or that you're secretly rich or incredible ripped. But in reality, you have just learned not to fret the small stuff.

This is powerful stuff, learn it!

Chapter 4: Social Nootropics



You might have noticed how I mentioned that the anxiety and the panic you feel actually comes from a chemical response. You are feeling anxious and shaking because your body is flooding itself with adrenaline, cortisol and other chemicals.

Chemicals affect our moods and our moods affect our behavior, decisions and performance.

If you can't get your chemical balance under control though, are there other options? On paper, yes. But we will see here that it isn't necessarily always a good idea to take this route.

What we're talking about here is known as 'social nootropics'. Nootropics are smart drugs, meaning they are supplements that

can make you smarter, improve your concentration, boost your memory etc. Think the film ‘Limitless’.

If your warning lights are flaring up because of the word ‘drugs’ then don’t worry – these aren’t necessarily drugs in that conventional sense. While some nootropics *are* drugs (such as modafinil, a medication originally designed to combat narcolepsy) others are supplements based on nutrients – things that we naturally get in our diets.

The only problem? Many of us no longer eat a varied enough diet as we would have done in the wild. We eat lots of empty calories in the form of processed foods, meaning that we don’t have the balance of nutrients we need. And this can actually damage our chemical balance, making us *more* anxious.

Social Nootropics That Work and That Don’t

Take inositol for instance. This is a substance that is sometimes referred to as vitamin B8, although that isn’t technically accurate. Inositol is linked closely to choline, which is one of the most abundant neurotransmitters in the human brain, responsible for keeping us awake and alert and also for boosting our memory!

Inositol also has another use though, it can be used to create the neurotransmitter ‘serotonin’ in the human brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter associated with happiness and relaxation and it can boost our mood as well as relaxing us, reducing brain activity and helping us to feel more relaxed and more calm.

Inositol is not known to have any side effects and because it boost both choline and serotonin, it is often described as

triggering a kind of ‘clam focus’ – of boosting energy without creating anxiety.

But then there are others that are stronger. For instance, 5-HTP. This is a precursor to tryptophan (it stands for 5-hydroxy tryptophan) which in turn is a precursor to serotonin. Problem is, that 5-HTP is a lot stronger and so it can result in an over-abundance of serotonin in the brain. This in turn results in the brain producing *less* serotonin naturally in order to bring the ratio back to normal – which in turn can mean that you need the 5-HTP in order to maintain normal levels. This is known as tolerance and dependence. And it is a good reason to avoid any over-strong nootropics.

Another option is to use an anxiolytic – an anti-anxiety medication that is administered by your doctor. This should be considered a last resort however as these can have the same downsides to an even greater extent. For instance, benzodiazepines and barbiturates will work not by increasing serotonin but by increasing GABA. GABA (gamma aminobutyric acid) is an inhibitory neurotransmitter, the role of which is simply to reduce activity in the brain. GABA encourages sleep and is also produced when we drink. GABA can have the effect of reducing anxiety because it quietens the doubting part of our brain and therefore stops us from panicking or thinking of all the things that could go wrong.

But it also quietens other parts of our brain—such as the parts associated with talking or coming up with interesting responses to questions. With GABA abundant in our brains, we become slower and less interesting.

What's more, is that we can again find our brains adapting, resulting in addiction and even abuse – which can have long term, negative impacts on the brain.

A Useful Stack

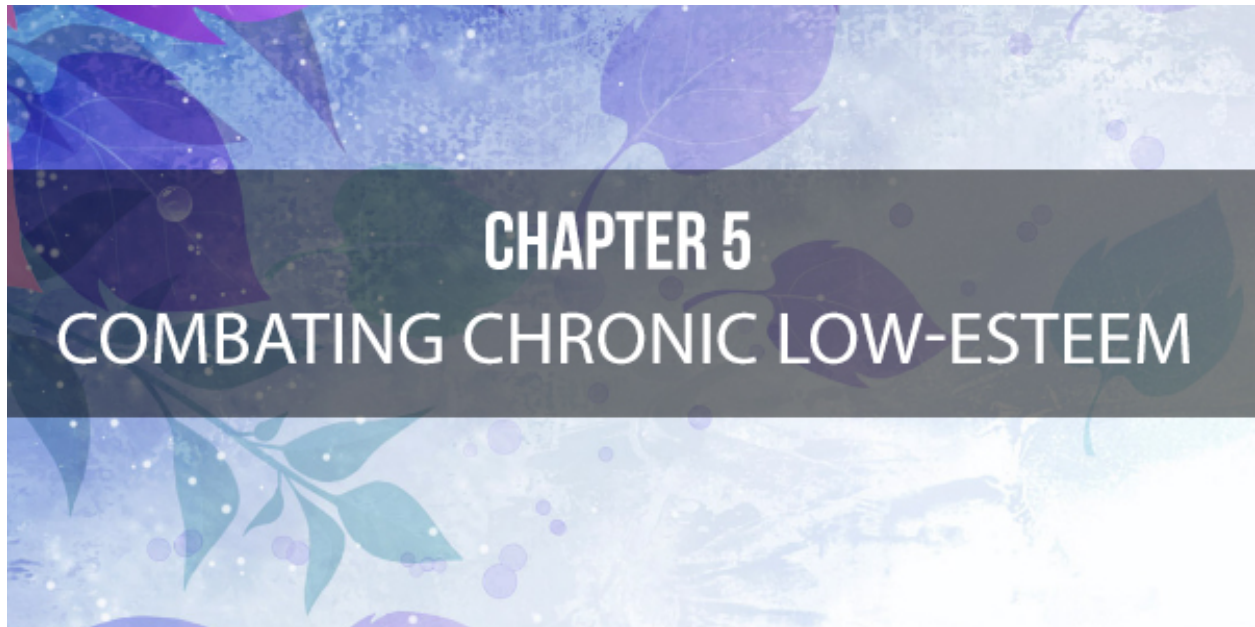
While you should avoid most chemical assistance then, what you *should* do is to try and maintain a healthy balance of nutrients. Eat the healthiest and most balanced diet possible and you will *naturally* find that you feel more confident and calmer in a variety of situations. Avoid processed foods and seek out those more exotic fruits and meats – organ meat in particular is fantastic. Use a vitamin supplement too.

For a little boost of confidence and calm, the following nutrients can safely help:

- Magnesium
- Vitamin C
- Inositol
- L-theanine

One more tip: if you are prone to anxiety, then avoid caffeine. Caffeine works by reducing adenosine in the brain. This inhibitory neurotransmitter is linked with feelings of calm, relaxation and even drowsiness. Take it out of the equation and the brain thinks something exciting is happening, thus triggering the release of more dopamine and adrenaline. Caffeine is effectively 'fight or flight in a cup' which is hence why you find yourself shaking when you have too much!

Chapter 5: Combating Chronic Low-Esteem



If you use the strategies in the previous two chapters, then you can come across as far more confident, simply by talking yourself out of the panic reaction that many people face in social situations.

But the best-case scenario is that you build up your self-esteem such that you don't even *need* this band-aid. In other words, you need to build such self-esteem and such confidence that you don't even *worry* that something you say might go down badly.

So how do you do this?

While there is no simple 'fix all' for this problem, there are some powerful changes you can make to greatly boost your esteem and feelings of self-worth.

For example...

Reminisce

Many of us have a tendency to repeat criticisms in our mind. This is a somewhat automatic response that we often can't help. Someone calls us stupid and for days later we still hear their voice saying it in our heads.

And we likewise tend to *forget* when someone says something good about us.

A quick and easy fix for this then is to try and focus a little more on the positives and the things that can boost your mood. Maybe try writing down all the things you've done well lately and all the things you've accomplished in your life. Maybe write down the things that you like about yourself or the things that people have said to you that are positive.

Maybe you've married someone beautiful/hot, maybe you've bought a great house, maybe you've never been in debt, maybe you've got a six pack, maybe you've held down a steady job for a long time.

And maybe someone once said you were good looking, maybe your boss complimented you recently on a fantastic project. Replay those wins in your mind and try to forget the negatives. This works just the same as CBT by helping you to focus more on the good and less on the bad.

Surround Yourself With Positivity

While it isn't a great move to blame our failings on others, often other people *can* be responsible for our low self-esteem. This is true if we hang out with the wrong crowd – if our friends are prone

to pointing out our flaws instead of building us up and raving about us.

And this is why you need to avoid toxic people. Ironically, if you consider everything that we have said in the first chapter, it is often the people who *lack confidence* who feel the need to try and damage ours. They make us feel small to make themselves feel bigger.

If you know negative and toxic people like this, then you should make a conscious attempt to *not* hang out with those kinds of people any more. Likewise, you should spend *more* time with the positive people who love you.

And if you *do* have to spend time with people who are damaging your esteem? Then just consider their motives for everything they say. If they are criticizing you, then is it because they genuinely think you've done something wrong? Or is it because they are jealous? Or because they're just a negative kind of person? Don't let it affect how you feel about yourself.

Improve Yourself

Many of us have things that we don't like about ourselves. But often, those things can be improved. And the sheer act of *trying* to improve can often be enough to give us a tremendous boost in self-worth.

So, if you don't like the way you look, then consider the ways you can improve your style perhaps to look better. If you feel too 'skinny' then bulk up. If you feel overweight, then lose weight. If you think you are a little slow witted, then work on your repartee. If your math lets you down, go get lessons!

Find the Right Role Models

We've already discussed the importance of social interaction in human psychology, so perhaps it should come as no surprise to learn just what a difference it makes to spend time in the right group and to *look up* to the right people.

Humans are constantly comparing themselves to others. And in fact, social comparison theory teaches us that this is one of the phenomena that most controls our happiness.

If you have a massive widescreen TV, then you will feel fairly happy. But if the neighbor has a *wider* screen TV, you feel less happy. If the neighbor has a smaller TV, you feel *more* happy.

In short, you assess your success by comparing yourself to others. But this is also how you decide whether to be confident or not.

In short, if you are fatter than everyone you know, then you will feel fat and you'll have low self-esteem. If you are less intelligent than everyone you know, then you'll feel less intelligent!

And here is the problem: we live in a world where images of wealthy, sexy, funny, intelligent celebrities with perfectly straight teeth are being shoved in our faces all the time. And we live in an age where social media is likewise full of images of people we know all leading seemingly perfect lives. We all want to make ourselves look happier and look more successful – so we only post images that make us look good and that make us look like we're constantly on holiday, partying or doing incredible things.

We do the same thing, but the difference is that we *know* we have bad days where we're sitting in front of the TV crying in our pajamas. We *know* that those holidays are few and far between. We know that we normally look much worse. But we only see the good stuff from everyone else.

As someone once put it: we essentially compare our own outtake reels with everyone else's 'best of' montages. Plus celebrities.

Is it any wonder that depression is rife? Especially when you combine this with the aforementioned *poor nutrition*?

The fix: start comparing yourself to the right people. And that means finding role models to look up to who are similar to you.

Look for people who you can emulate, who inspire you, but who are not so different to you as to be completely incomparable. Look for people who are like the best version of you – rather than completely false manufactured images.

Having something to aim for that is attainable and knowing what you want to be can help you to feel MUCH more confident.

Chapter 6: Knowing Your Mission



All those tips in chapter 5 will help you to massively boost your confidence. But nothing is as powerful as this next tip: know what your mission is.

Know what your passion is.

Have something for which you feel truly excited and want to get up every morning for.

Our self-esteem and our confidence is linked to how successful we are and how good we are at the things that matter to us. This *can* mean that our self-esteem is tied up in how we feel we perform in social settings because that's what matters to us.

But now imagine that you're a professional swimmer. Swimming is your passion. So, in social interactions, you're less concerned with what other people think because swimming is what matters to you and you *know* that you're good at swimming.

Having a ‘thing’ like this can give you a sense of purpose, of success and of worth. And it can make you socially ‘untouchable’ in a whole manner of different ways.

And this also means that you are naturally being yourself more and naturally eschewing those social conventions. Because you’re following your passion.

Is it any wonder you feel unconfident at work when the work you’re doing is something you don’t care about and don’t feel that you’re particularly good at? Imagine if you followed your heart and did something you were truly passionate about: you’d be so much more enthusiastic *and* confident in your own abilities!

Charisma

And guess what? Being absolutely passionate about something is also something that is known to give people charisma.

Charisma is what happens when we speak with someone who seems to completely enrapture us in what they’re saying. We hang off of their every word because they are so magnetic and so compelling.

And it turns out that the people who are most charismatic are the people who gesticulate most, who walk around most and who use their body language the most.

And guess what makes you do this more? Being highly passionate about what you’re speaking about.

Because when someone talks with passion and fire, their body language becomes *naturally* congruent with what they’re saying.

And they become so enthused and so keen for their topic that they can't help but let their body express what they're saying.

And people can't help but watch because it is so engaging and because they can *pick up* on that incredible conviction.

Being in Flow

What's more, is that being highly passionate about something puts us in a state called 'flow'. Flow is kind of like a more positive version of the fight or flight response. This is what happens when we're so focused on what we're doing and when it feels so important to us, that everything else in the world almost seems to just 'fall away'.

The prefrontal cortex shuts down again and this removes that nagging voice. At the same time, our brain is filled with serotonin and anandamide (happiness hormones) *along* with alertness hormones like dopamine, adrenaline etc.

In short, you become completely fixated not because you're scared for your life but because you are inspired. And this is the opposite of lacking in confidence. Flow states make conversations flow smoothly, they improve our reactions and they make us magnetic.

So find what you love doing, spend more time doing that and then you'll have a mission. You'll have a purpose. And you'll spend large amounts in flow and speaking in an animated and engaging way. Confidence will flow naturally out from that.

When you are truly passionate about something you do and you are confident in your ability in that capacity, then you have no need to try and impress people, to overcompensate, etc. Instead, you can be happy in the knowledge that the thing you really care about is going well. That you have *reason* to be confident.

Now you don't need to try and 'fit in' and there's no reason you can't be kind, generous and sharing with the people you meet in other walks of life.

Chapter 7: The Confidence of Success



This is linked closely with success. Flow states are highly associated with start-ups and businesses that are truly passionate about what they do, and reportedly, it makes those businesses far more productive and ultimately far more successful.

And there are more ways that this kind of unshakeable confidence can impact on your success and the way that you grow in life.

What you'll find, is that confidence is a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. It starts a virtuous cycle of growth, development and success.

Confidence begets success and success begets confidence!

Rock Solid Confidence in Your Pursuits

Confidence starts by giving you rock solid faith in your entrepreneurial goals, your career progression and any other objectives you may have in life.

And this makes all the difference to the amount of time you invest in it.

Because any new venture is a risk to some degree. If you start up a new business, then you are risking your investment capital, not to mention your reputation if it goes under.

This means that we will very often not put our all into that thing. Often, we kind of 'half' start a project or an endeavor, this way if it doesn't pan out then we haven't lost as much. What's more, is that it won't damage our reputation or our ego so much. We can chalk it up to the fact that we didn't put 100% into it, after all!

But this of course ends up limiting the likelihood of our plans coming to fruition. And so, ultimately, we fail.

In fact, having rock-solid confidence in a plan, is *the* number one way you can increase the chances of that plan working.

We can see this by looking at attempts to get in shape. *Many* of us have at some point started a workout routine or a fitness program with the intention of getting ripped and muscular. Unfortunately, that plan doesn't end up working right away and we give up. Hands up if that has happened to you!

But maybe you didn't give it long enough. Maybe you gave up after two weeks instead of a few months.

And why? Because deep down, you kind of didn't expect it to work. You didn't have complete faith in it, and so you gave up early.

If you had honestly believed it could work, then you would have stuck it through.

Many of us assume this isn't the case. We think that we're probably just *lazy* instead.

But now think about the way you go to work. You probably wake up every day at 7am (at the latest!) in order to make the commute to work, where you type at a desk for 8 hours straight. That's certainly not lazy!

So what's the difference? The difference is that you know with *absolute certainty* that you'll get paid if you go to work. Whereas if you workout, there's only a relatively slim chance (in your mind) that it will work.

If you knew with 100% certainty that spending half an hour a night on a business plan would help you to get rich, then you can rest assured that you *definitely* would invest that time.

It all comes down to certainty, which comes down to confidence!

The Law of Attraction

Confidence can also enhance your likelihood of success via something known as the law of attraction. This is the rule that dictates that you get back out of life what you put in. If you believe in yourself, others do to, and good things come.

If you doubt yourself, then you won't take the necessary chances, you'll dash the confidence that others have in you, and you'll not be successful.

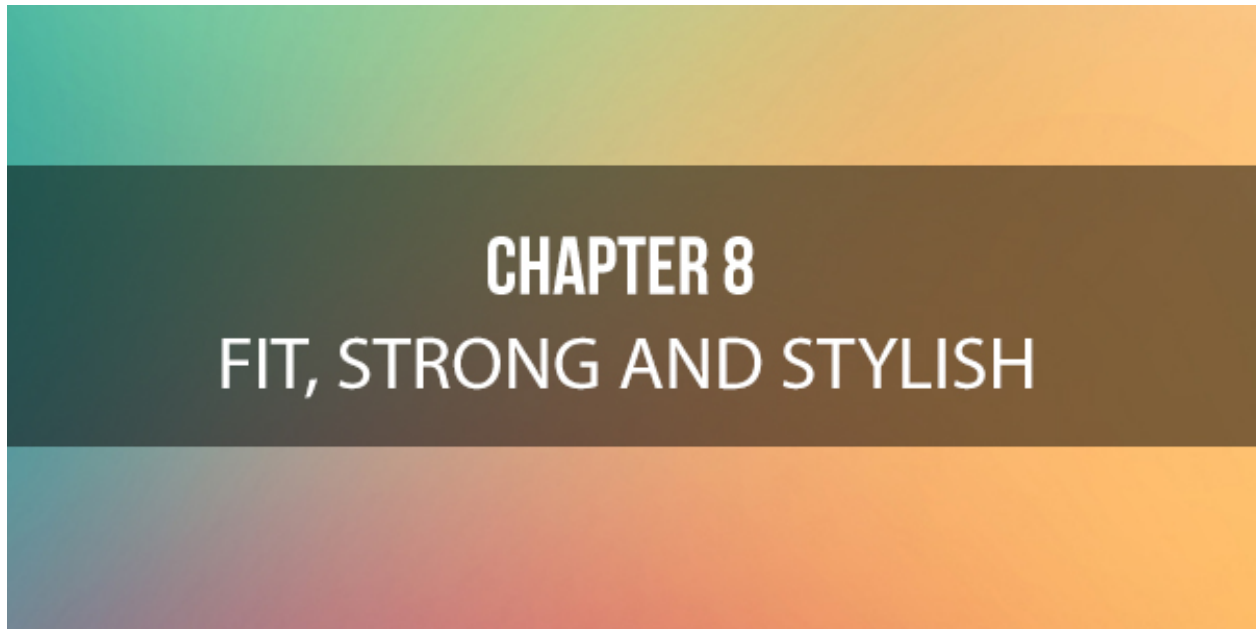
As you act, so you become.

This is most obviously true when it comes to the way you act at work. If you are confident in yourself, then you speak up in meetings, you take on more responsibility, you walk with an air of someone who knows what they're doing. Thus, your boss gives you more responsibilities and maybe promotions. Thus you are more likely to be given big important tasks, etc.

Conversely, if you are shy and never speak up, then you'll hardly be noticed and you certainly won't climb the ranks in your organization.

In the dating scene, being confident and sure of yourself – if your recall – sends out the message that you are a genetic catch. This in turn means that members of the opposite sex will assume the same thing and they will want to try and impress you.

Chapter 8: Fit, Strong and Stylish



The best ways to enhance your confidence are those that we've discussed already. These address the deep seated causes for low esteem and they help you to train yourself out of panic and anxiety responses.

That means improving yourself, finding role models, reminding yourself of positive interactions and successes, surrounding yourself with the right people, facing your fears and practicing being social. Finally, find your passion and invest in that, without worrying about what others think.

All this does a great deal to enhance your esteem but you can also make yourself more confident in a more direct and 'surface level' way. That means just changing the things about yourself that we most often associate with esteem.

That means, in particular, the way you look.

Many of us have low self-esteem *primarily* because we don't like the way we look or because we think we are out of shape. If you are overweight, overly thin or conventionally *unattractive*, then this can make it hard to overlook and to focus on the things that you *do* like about yourself.

These are the strongest signals of our social status and our genetic value. And conversely, if you are a woman who looks *stunning* and has a perfect hip-to-waist ratio and can't help attract the gaze of men, then you *will* be confident. If you are a guy who is tall, naturally masculine and with a perfect body and fantastic dress sense, you will always find it easy to feel a little more confident!

So, let's fix both these aspects shall we?

Style for Men and Women

When it comes to the way you dress there are a few things to consider.

Firstly, remember what we said in the first chapter about understanding social cues and social norms – how being unaware of the way that others perceive you is the surest form of social suicide!

This is why dressing like your favorite TV character doesn't make you cool. This makes you seem detached from reality, it makes you seem unaware of what others think. And it makes you seem like you're rather fond of yourself even though you're nothing like the real Green Arrow!

This is what ‘fashion’ is all about. You can’t write off the rules of fashion because following fashion demonstrates that you follow social norms and conventions, that you know what is in vogue right now and that you are in touch. Being unfashionable suggests that you are a little clueless or so involved in your own little world that you missed the fact that flares went out of fashion in the 70s.

You don’t have to be a slave to fashion, but demonstrating some understanding of what is right now in vogue is highly advisable.

But at the same time, you should also have your own style and you should be willing to take measured risks from time to time. This is the interplay between fashion and style. Style is the part where you take chances, where you demonstrate your own personality and where you are confident enough to go *against the grain*. But it all must be done *within* the rules of fashion.

Looking Good

But ultimately? The most important role of your clothes is to make you look awesome. And this means selling your best physical traits in order to ensure you look like a good genetic catch. At the same time, wearing quality materials makes you look wealthier, which in turn – again – makes you seem like a better choice for a mate, ally or employee.

The first tip then, is to own fewer clothes but to make sure that they are higher quality. It is *far* better to have 5 shirts that are made from 100% cotton than it is to have 20 shirts that are low quality. The key is to choose items that can be mixed and matched in various ways, and this way you can create a full wardrobe with fewer items.

Learn to buy on discount, take advantage of black Friday, and in general recognize that quality is worth seeking out.

At the same time, learn what looks good on you and what your own best qualities are. Clothing can be used to draw attention or to distract attention. It can draw the eye, or it can provide a kind of ‘optical illusion effect’ to make things seem bigger or smaller.

For instance, vertical lines make us look taller, while horizontal lines make us look smaller. Cinching clothes in at the waist makes us look slimmer. Brightly colored items draw attention to those spots.

In almost *all* cases, better fitting clothes will look better than baggy clothes. Don’t make the mistake of believing a baggy top will make you look slimmer. Baggy clothes hang off of you, which actually means they take up *more* space. AT the same time, the appearance of trying to *hide* your real physique will make you look less confident.

A good tip then is to buy clothes and then have them taken in – which is far more affordable than buying bespoke. Get a suit but then take it to a tailor and ask them to make it better fitted. When buying sizes, always try on one size smaller and you might be surprised at how good it looks.

Physique

As for your body, there is really not space in this book to go through an entire training program!

But first, recognize the importance of investing time and effort into your physique. This is one of *the* most prominent social signals we put out and one of *the* most powerful ways to make ourselves feel more confident and successful.

Not only that, but being physically superior to someone you're speaking to will infuse you with infinite confidence.

At the end of the day, this is so often what it comes down to. If you are more powerful than the person you're speaking to, then you will be able to beat them in a physical confrontation. Thus, if they don't like what you say and they challenge you, you can put them in their place *physically* if you have to.

And that means you'll have the edge in every conversation. Especially if your physicality *communicates* this fact.

The basic things to know about getting into this kind of shape:

- Training 3 times per week is generally enough to drastically enhance your size and strength
- Resistance cardio is an incredibly potent method for weight loss and body recomposition – this means performing cardio exercise while there is a weight of some sort against you
- Diet is every bit as important as exercise. Track your calories and consume more than you burn to increase your size, or less than you burn to lose weight.
- Eat more protein to add muscle
- Going to a class or something can help structure your recomposition and make training more fun
- In particular, that means something like dance class or martial arts. This has the added bonus of making you more functional, meaning that the strength is useable

- For conveying size and power, you should place emphasis on shoulders, chest and arms. Incline bench press is among the very best exercises you can do.
- For women, the squat or the kettlebell swing is fantastic for developing the most desirable proportions

Chapter 9: The Most Powerful Tool: Meditation



One last incredible tool for enhancing your confidence and overcoming social anxiety is meditation.

Many people are reluctant to give meditation a chance, thinking of it as being somehow mystical or associating it only with Eastern religion and philosophy. This is not what meditation is in reality at all.

Instead, meditation is simply the act of concentration – of consciously choosing how you want to direct your attention and deciding what you focus on.

We've already seen how ruminations and worry can end up making us anxious and harm our confidence. Meditation gives us the ability to decide what we want to think about – which can include not thinking about anything at all. Often, meditation amounts to simply calming your mind and clearing it.

Once you get good, you can thus detach yourself from your thoughts or completely remove them at any given point. The next time you are panicking about talking in public, you can simply choose to rise above it and *let go* of your anxiety – which is incredibly powerful.

Meditation also involves practiced breathing, which is one of the most effective ways to overcome stress. That's because our breathing is closely linked to our stress response and our sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. When we're stressed we breathe more rapidly to get more blood to our muscles and brain. When we slow down this breathing, it has the opposite effect and helps to move us back into the calmer state known as 'rest and digest'.

Over time, studies show that practicing meditation can help us to be calmer, happier and more logical. We can rise above things that don't matter and only focus on those things that do. Not only that, but it actually increases the dominance of slower, calmer brain waves. And it increases cortical thickness and the number of neural connections in the brain. In short, meditation is incredibly good for your brain power and performance too.

How to Get Started With Meditation

There are many ways to get started with meditation and there are many different types of meditation too.

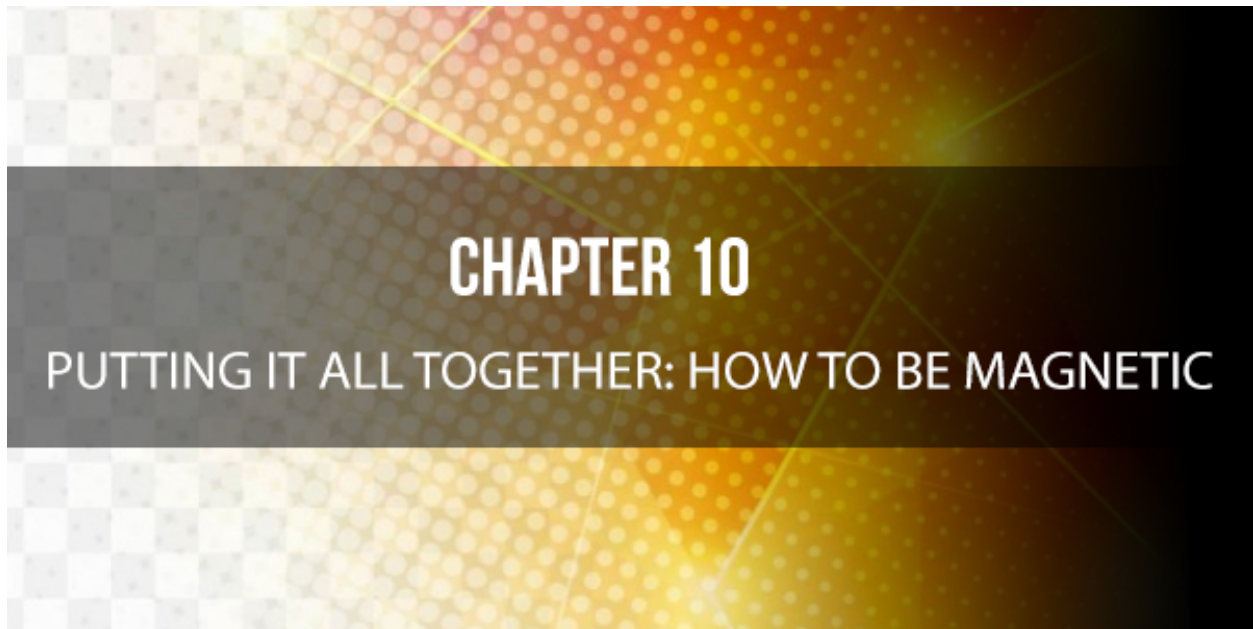
Transcendental meditation involves completely clearing the mind of all thoughts and the way you often do this is to focus on a 'mantra'. This is a word or a phrase you will repeat over and over again and focus on, in order to clear out your thoughts.

This can also take the form of a 'hum' or an 'om'. Others might fix their gaze on something, such as a candle flickering.

The more common form of meditation in the West is known as mindfulness. This form of meditation is practiced in CBT and it involves making the conscious choice to not *ignore* thoughts but instead to watch them in an impassionate and objective manner. The description used is often that you are watching thoughts go by 'like clouds'.

To get started with this form of meditation, I highly recommend looking for online guides. YouTube has many videos that will provide guided meditation sessions. Likewise, you could also try the app 'Headspace', which has ten free lessons to get started.

Chapter 10: Putting it All Together: How to be Magnetic



With all of these tips and all this advice, you hopefully have the tools you need to begin becoming more confident, magnetic and charming. You should feel passionate, engaging, charismatic and all those good things!

But how does this all work in practice? Let's end with a great example of how you might walk into a bar, own the room and leave with the number of someone you have your eye on!

Because a lot of people approach this the entirely wrong way. They enter the bar, they eye people up, they go up and fire off some line or they just dance 'near them' until they hope they'll start grinding against them.

The first move is transparent and a little seedy. The second move is wimpy – it's like you're too shy to ask the question or introduce yourself, so you're leaving it to them to do the work!

Instead, try this. Walk into the bar and instead of looking for someone to flirt with, instead look for people to be friends with. Look for people to have a good time with. Immediately, this subtle shift in approach means you're not looking to score, you're not trying to *get something* from your interactions. And that means you can relax! Now, you can be friendly, you can be chatty and you can be fun and gregarious.

Try smiling at people in the room. Smiling is immensely powerful. It makes you look attractive, it conveys your intention, but it also shows that you are confident. You're being generous but you're also putting yourself out there. By smiling, you allow yourself to be vulnerable and that means that you must be confident in order to allow that!

If they smile back, head over but don't just talk to the person you want to 'pull' – talk to their whole group. Again, this shows confidence and if everyone likes you, it sends a powerful social signal that you are desirable and you are someone that people should strive to attain.

Be open, friendly, laugh loudly and ask questions. Don't show off or just look for your angle. Talk to everyone evenly. And then, if you want to, single out the object of your affections and ask them if you can get them a drink.

Conclusion: Confidence Checklist



Now you have the complete picture and hopefully you've learned a LOT about what makes you tick, about where your own anxieties come from and about how you can transform into a more confident, social and happy version of yourself.

Let's end with a quick checklist of things to remember to try to begin that confidence transformation...

- Find a passion – spend time developing yourself in areas that you feel strongly about
- Don't try to impress people – be yourself
- Don't be aggressive
- But try to be physically capable should it ever come down to a confrontation!
- Use thought challenging to remove your anxieties and worries

SELF-CONFIDENCE TRANSFORMATION

- Use hypothesis testing and practice facing your fears to desensitize yourself to the worst-case scenarios
- Be friendly, generous and kind to appear more social!
- Look after your health and eat a balanced nutritious diet
- Dress well
- Meditate
- Surround yourself with positive people
- Find the right role models
- Act as you wish to become

Don't expect to be overflowing with confidence overnight. This is a comprehensive and profound transformation.

But it is oh so worth it.